

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

FIRST READING *Ecc1 27:30-28:7*

Forgive your neighbour's faults and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins? Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments. Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 102:1-4, 9-12. R. v. 8

**R. The Lord is kind and merciful;
slow to anger and rich in compassion.**

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord
all my being, bless his holy name.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. R

2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the
grave, who crowns you with love
and compassion. R
3. His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry for ever.
He does not treat us according to
our sins nor repay us according to
our faults. R
4. For as the heavens are high above
the earth so strong is his love for
those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins. R

SECOND READING *Romans 14:7-9*

Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life: it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Jn 13:34*

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL *Mt 18:21-35*

*I tell you that you forgive not seven times
but seventy times seven.*

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times. 'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his

master's feet. "Give me time" he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me" he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'
The Gospel of the Lord.

CREED

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son,
our Lord,
(*All bow during these two lines*)
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again
from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God
the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

Forgiveness Has Implications in This Life, the Next'

Biblical Reflection for 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time A

Today's Gospel (Matthew 18:21-35) addresses the necessity of repentance and repeated forgiveness that are required of those who call themselves Christian. The Gospel passage can be divided into two major sections: Peter's question of Jesus: "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" (21-22). Jesus tells Peter that forgiveness knows no bounds or limits (22). Jesus then uses the parable of the unmerciful servant to drive home his point (23-34).

There is some similarity of Matthew's parable to the story related in Luke 17:4, but the parable and its ending are unique to Matthew's account. In examining Matthew's parable of the king and the servant closely, we realize that it doesn't necessarily describe Jesus' insistence on repeated forgiveness, which was the whole point of Peter's question and Jesus' subsequent reply.

The first slave had become vulnerable; he was weak and worthless before the king as he stood before him begging. He regains power by demanding repayment from the fellow-slave and imprisonment when he cannot pay. He will not give up this power over others. And yet the fellow servants' reporting is like the first servant's own activity. In the end the fellow servants have behaved in the same way he did; they failed to forgive and demanded punishment.

In the final analysis, the Father's forgiveness, already given, will be withdrawn at the final judgment for those who have not imitated his forgiveness by their own (35). Jesus warns that his heavenly Father will give those who are unforgiving the same treatment as that accorded to the unmerciful servant.

Lingering questions. What does it mean, "to forgive"? First of all forgiveness implies that there is something to forgive. Whether it's something big or small, the need for forgiveness means somebody has done something wrong. The Greek word used for "forgiveness" in today's parable means "to send away" or "to make apart." Forgiveness "sends away" whatever has been keeping people apart. Anger or feelings of vengeance are "sent away." By forgiving, one is no longer under the control of that past sinful act he suffered. We know that Jesus demands boundless forgiveness of his disciples. Forgiving and showing mercy, however are not always simple matters.

Forgiveness doesn't mean that the people will be reconciled immediately. Nevertheless, it begins the healing process and helps to remove feelings of revenge. To ignore Jesus' teaching on forgiveness has serious implications in this life and in the next. Do we really believe that our eternal destiny and salvation are harmed or hindered by our inability to forgive while we are on this earth? How do we do justice and show mercy? These are certainly not easy questions for us to answer and they surface in us a myriad of emotions that are also present in this parable.

That is why we need to listen closely to the words of Sirach in today's first reading (27:30-28:7): "Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight. The vengeful will suffer the LORD's vengeance, for he remembers their sins in detail. Forgive your neighbour's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven."

Despite the message of Jesus and the clear teachings of the Church, many people may still be caught up in the anger and outrage over violent crime. Gut-level reactions may still cry out for vengeance, but Jesus' example in the Gospels invites all to develop a new and different attitude toward violence.

The Church is called to break down the barriers that divide peoples, to build up relationships of trust and to foster forgiveness and reconciliation among peoples who have become estranged. As followers of Jesus we must be prophets of justice and peace, and always passionate about the suffering of humanity in our times.

ST PAUL'S PARISH

562 SYDNEY ROAD, COBURG. VIC 3058

Tel: 9354-1564

Email: coburg@cam.org.au

Or stpaulcoburg@yahoo.com.au

Website: cam.org.au/coburg

Parish Priest: Fr. Raymond Bugeja

Parish Secretary: Mrs Loretta Meilak

St Paul's School Principal: Mrs Maria Mercuri

School Tel: 9354-8970

St Paul's Parish strives to create an environment where children are safe, respected and cared for.



PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon - Friday: 10.30am to 3.30 pm.

MASSES:

Weekends: Saturday: 6:00 pm (vigil),
8.00pm (Neo Catechumenate)

Sunday: 9:00am, 10.30am (Italian),

Weekdays: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri: 10.00 am.

CONFESSIONS: Saturdays - 11am and 6.45pm

CHILDREN'S LITURGY: 1st & 3rd Sunday of month-9am Mass

ADORATION: First Friday of the month: 10.30 am to 12pm

BAPTISMS: Sundays at 12.00 pm.

BAPTISM PREPERATION MEETINGS: Once Monthly

MARRIAGE PREP MEETINGS: Wed 8pm or Sat 4pm

WEDDING REHEARSALS: Mon or Fri – 8pm

COMMUNION TO THE HOUSEBOUND: Thurs & Fri.

COMMUNION TO SICK at Bupa & Northern Gardens:
every 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month.

ANointing OF THE SICK: 2 times a year (Lent & Advent).

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 10am

JOKE OF THE WEEK - TOO MUCH PRAISE

A Christian guy named Bill saw an ad online for a Christian horse, so he went to check it out. The horse's owner said, "It's easy to ride him. Just say 'Praise the Lord!' to make him go and 'Amen!' to make him stop." Bill got on the horse and said, "Praise the Lord!" Sure enough, the horse started to walk. "Praise the Lord!" he said again, and the horse began to trot. "Praise the Lord!" he said again, and the horse began to trot. "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" he yelled, and the horse broke into a gallop. Bill was enjoying his ride so much that he almost didn't notice the cliff he and the horse were about to go over. Bill shouted "AMEN!" at the top of his lungs, and the horse stopped right at the edge of the cliff. Relieved, Bill said, "Phew! Praise the Lord!"

THANKSGIVING – DIRECT DEPOSIT BANK DETAILS

BSB: 083-347

Account Number: 67541 0884

Account Name: St Paul's Catholic Church.

AUGUST THANKSGIVING OFFERING: \$1990.50

Presbytery: \$ 259.12

Works done recently: Presbytery roof: \$40,000

Painting of presbytery inside: \$12,400

Thanks for your support in these challenging times.

LETTER FROM THE ARCHBISHOP:

Dear friends and colleagues,

My greetings of grace and peace to you all in the Lord Jesus.

I am sitting down to write to you on this first day of Spring, in a year like no other. In a normal year, each of us will have personal and family journeys – with their griefs and sorrows, hopes and joys – in which the lives and stories of those around us are not necessarily joined to ours. But in this COVID year of 2020, we have come to share a common story and journey, even while experiencing it each individually. We can empathise with our neighbours and work colleagues; we readily understand the stresses and strains being experienced; we share in the fatigue and worry that is now part of our daily lives; we each yearn for and treasure those moments of joy and warmth and comfort and relief.

As we enter this fourth week of Stage 4 restrictions in metropolitan Melbourne, Spring is emerging. It is my hope that this change in seasons – from death to life, from the old to the new – also marks a move towards a better accommodation with COVID. Case numbers do seem to be steadily lowering, even as the tragedy of those who have succumbed to the virus continues.

While I may not know each of your personal circumstances, I have been particularly mindful of the various relationships which have taken on new or deeper significances for you over these past six months. There are those of you with elderly parents and grandparents who you have not been able to see or visit over this time; grandparents who have been separated from their children and grandkids; even children you yourself may have been separated from. Those of you in spousal relationships have experienced lengthy periods in close quarters with each other, and all that that has revealed. Many of you are in family circumstances with children living at home, especially the younger ones, and the delights and challenges that has generated (and the shifts in appreciation of teachers that has emerged!). The disconnection and sadness that has come with the physical separation of extended family, close friends, neighbours and work colleagues. The few of us who live alone have also felt what it means to be unable to see friends or have people visit. St Patrick's Centre, PO Box 146, East Melbourne VIC 8002 Australia Tel: +61 3 9926 5612 Email: archbishop@cam.org.au

I want to acknowledge your resilience and flexibility during these unprecedented times, and the great stresses these days may have brought to you and your families, but also the gifts that have been revealed. Whatever our personal circumstances, this time of honest revelation also offers a great moment for renewal and growth; to discover what is important, and to put aside what can consume us but which is unfruitful.

Words from the Prophet Isaiah have come to me as I write, which I now offer to you. *For as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not return before watering the earth, fertilising it and making it germinate... so it is with the word that goes forth from [God's] mouth.* (Isaiah 55.10-11) The Lord has a good purpose for each of us in this difficult time; it may remain hidden for the moment, but it will grow and sprout and bear fruit for us. For the Lord has promised: *Look, I am making everything new.* (Revelations 22.5)

My friends, be assured of my closeness in prayer and kindness as this season of Spring opens up to us, and as we continue to navigate our way through all that 2020 has thrown our way. May St Joseph – that Godly man of faith, trust and courage – accompany you!

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus, +Peter Comensoli

WE PRAY FOR

We pray for those in our local community who are **sick** and vulnerable: may they see in us the followers of a God who heals and serves.

Let us pray for those who have died recently, and those whose anniversaries we remember at this time, that they may enter the peace of God.

STEWARDSHIP:

“For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s” - ROMANS 14:8

This is the essence of stewardship – everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God. We aren’t “owners” of anything, we are merely “stewards” of the gifts that God has given us, especially our very own lives. Pray to God, daily, and ask Him how He wants you to use the gifts He has given you.

REFLECTION: Forgiveness yields freedom

Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.” Matthew 18:22

This is Jesus’ famous response to the question of how many times we should forgive someone. He emphatically teaches us that we are to be gentle, compassionate, merciful and patient. In our humanness, we are bound to hurt each other. In our divinity, we are also bound to forgive. Because the Holy Spirit dwells within us, we are equipped and empowered to love unconditionally. Jesus knows that holding onto resentment and bitterness causes us to poison ourselves. Forgiveness yields freedom, peace and well-being. Just as we are called to forgive others, we are also called to forgive ourselves with the same kindness and generosity of spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate areas of unforgiveness and bring them into the light of healing and restoration. It’s time to let old grudges dissolve. It’s time to clean up the dusty corners in the basement of our conscience. It’s time to unkink the hose and restore the flow of ease and joy in our lives. It’s time to let others, and ourselves, off the hook.

Kristin Armstrong

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

That we recognize everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God, including our very own lives.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK – Worry

Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, but only saps today of its strength.

A.J. Cronin

VOCATION VIEW

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Make a stand for mercy, empathy, forgiveness and selflessness!

AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

At this time, we cannot receive you Lord Jesus sacramentally in the Eucharist. Help us to welcome you spiritually as we wait for the day when your saving Sacrifice will be offered and the divine Banquet will be spread in our churches once more. You are the Lamb of God who take away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb. Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. But only say the word and my soul shall be healed. My Jesus, come to me. I long for you; let me always be at one with you.

St Alphonsus Ligouri

NEWS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

Project Compassion 2020 result.

Dear friends,

The final result for the Project Compassion 2020 campaign are in, and I wish to thank everyone in Melbourne who has contributed to an amazing result, considering bushfires, lockdowns, and the well-known difficulties that our schools, parishes and other institutions have had to work under since March.

The people of Melbourne contributed **\$1.216 million** this year - a truly outstanding result which speaks to generosity, and the willingness of so many people to send their contributions directly to Caritas, and to the many priests and people in parishes, and school families and staffs, that made the extra effort to raise donations and send them in. We’re very aware that many of our contributors are themselves dealing with the economic effects of lockdowns and restrictions, including unemployment and loss of business, which makes the contributions even more exceptional. All of us in Caritas are deeply, deeply grateful for your dedication to this part of the Catholic church’s work with those in need. This work is even more vital at a time when the whole world is in crisis.

To put this year’s figure in context, it compares with the \$1.524 million donated in 2019, a very different time when many of us in Australia were in very different personal circumstances. Overall, Project Compassion throughout Australia this year raised \$7.9 million, as compared to \$10.9 million last year.

Finally, this is probably the last communication you’ll have from me as Diocesan Director for Caritas Australia. This has been a privilege for me. In my three years in this ministry I’ve been deeply moved by the generosity of so many Melbourne people, and their passion for justice. Thank you.

Jim Curtain

Emergency Appeal for Lebanon. Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Australia has launched a national emergency appeal for Lebanon, requesting prayers for victims and their families, and raising funds in the wake of the deadly explosion in Beirut on the 4th of August, which has killed at least 135 people, injured 5000 and decimated the capital city. The funds raised will be used to support the most urgent needs in Lebanon (such as emergency food packages) but they will also respond to the physical and spiritual needs that arise in the coming weeks, months and years.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER ONLINE WEEKEND. If you are spending time together, but feel the distance between you ... A great opportunity to spend a weekend improving your communication in the comfort of your own home.

This VIRTUAL Weekend gives couples the chance to sleep in their own beds and check-in on kids or animals during meal times.

Come and learn how to keep/rekindle the passion in your relationship and how to keep your love growing!

The weekend we offer is based around Catholic values but couples of all faiths are welcome.

Couples from regional areas may find this option ideal.

Next weekend is on **9-11th October 2020.**

Information/Bookings: Phone **Mercy & James 0409 183 676** or Email: vicbookings@wwme.org.au Website: wwme.org.au